

A RESOLUTION relative to special education in Tennessee and
the reauthorization of the federal I.D.E.A. Act.

WHEREAS, there exists a growing body of opinion among educators and parents across this state and nation that change in special education is necessary; and

WHEREAS, this body of public opinion contends that special education has become overly expensive and frequently ineffective; and

WHEREAS, as a result, the “free appropriate public education” promised to all children has suffered greatly; and

WHEREAS, because the 104th U.S. Congress is presently considering the reauthorization of the I.D.E.A. Act, this is a good opportunity to capitalize on this growing interest in improving special education and initiate changes that are important for the enhancement of education for all students; and

WHEREAS, the Clarksville-Montgomery County School System has joined with educators across the state in expressing concern about the role special education has come to play in the education of all students - both special education students and regular education students; and

WHEREAS, because of their great concern about the present and future role of special education in our society, the Clarksville-Montgomery County School System has issued a position paper entitled “Necessary Changes in Special Education” that identifies the multitude of problems inhibiting the effective provision and administration of special education in our state and proposes viable solutions to such problems at both the state and federal governmental levels; and

WHEREAS, this document proposes that significant changes in the I.D.E.A. Act and in the states' interpretation of such statutes be made; and

WHEREAS, it is very appropriate that the members of this General Assembly should enlist the experience and the opinions of the educators who work diligently in the field of special education everyday of their professional lives, as we endeavor more evenly to distribute educational opportunities for all children; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE NINETY-NINTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING, That the State Board of Education is hereby directed to study and examine the Clarksville-Montgomery County School System's position paper entitled "Necessary Changes in Education", and then make recommendations to this General Assembly relative to the feasibility and desirability of implementing the proposed solutions to special education problems contained in such document to enhance and improve the provision of special education at the state level.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That the State Board of Education shall report its findings and recommendations relative to such study, including any proposed legislation, to the General Assembly no later than January 1, 1996.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That a certified copy of this resolution be transmitted to the Executive Director of the State Board of Education and the Commissioner of Education.